**NAME: BAIYERE PEACE TOSIN**

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**COLLEGE: LAW**

**COURSE CODE: BUS 208**

**COURSE TITLE: CONSUMER BEHAVIOR**

**Assignment**

What are the roles of consumers in marketing?

**MARKETING**

The American Marketing Association defined marketing as ***‘the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and the society at large’***. Marketing is the management process through which goods and services move from concept to the customer. Marketing is used to create, keep and satisfy the customer or the final consumer as the case may be. It is the study and management of exchange of relationships.

**WHO IS A CONSUMER?**

A consumer is a person who both buys and uses the product and services. A consumer is also called the end user. A consumer is a person or organization that uses economic services and commodities. Consumers play a very vital role in the economic system of a nation. Without consumer demand, producers would lack one of the key motivations to produce: to sell to consumers. The consumer also forms part of the chain of distribution.

A customer is simply a buyer while a consumer is the individual who both buys and uses the product and services. A consumer is a customer, but a customer is not always a consumer in a business transaction. The term ‘consumer’ has a more distinct definition compared to the term ‘customer’.

**THE ROLE OF CONSUMER IN MARKETING**

The consumer plays a very vital role in the economic system of the nation. The consumers could be the **initiator** who determines that some needs or want is not being met and authorizes to rectify the situation, it could also be the **influencer**, who intentionally or unintentionally influences the purchase decision, it could be the **buyer** who actually makes the purchase transaction and could be the **user**, who directly consumes the product. Some other roles a consumer plays in marketing include:

* Marketing research
* Product feedback
* Introduction of more consumers

**Marketing research:**

Consumers play a major role in marketing research before a product or service is released to the public. Once the target consumers are identified, invitations can be sent to the people to participate in focus groups or send them surveys to quiz them on key elements of the marketing plans. Questioning them about the right price to charge and what marketing strategy appeals to them as consumers can help guide the marketing plan already drafted particularly when releasing a new product.

**Product feedback:**

The consumer also plays a role in the feedback-gathering process after the company product hits the market. After the market plan has been implemented, and the product and service released to the market, the reactions of the consumers need to be tracked to allow for improvements in the future. For instance, software developers seek feedback from users regularly to help them develop new and improved versions of such software.

**Introduction of new consumers:**

Consumers can also act as agents to further the effects of the marketing plan. With word-of-mouth strategy, consumers who have used the product and like it, can refer other consumers to the product. This form of market strategy is free and very effective, as individuals tend to believe the word of people they know when it comes to trying new products and services. For instance, a person who uses DSTV EXPLORA can convince someone using HD-PVR DSTV decoder by telling him/her why his own product is better and more interesting than the others, telling him the features of his own product which the other product cannot do even though booth are from the same company.